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ABSTRACT

Opponents of the legal recognition of homosexual unions have based their arguments in part on the premise that children brought up by parents of the same sex face significant social and psychological disadvantages. Presenting a longitudinal study of 25 children raised in lesbian mother families, and a comparison group raised by single heterosexual mothers, this book discusses the developmental effects of growing up in a same-sex household. The chapters are: (1) "Introduction," which discusses the research on lesbian-led families and related issues; (2) "Parental Influences on Child Development," which examines the influence of heterosexual mothers on the social, emotional, and sexual identity development of their children; (3) "The Longitudinal Study," which describes the sample of lesbian mothers and their children, the comparison group of children brought up by heterosexual mothers, the methodology, and the data collection and analysis; (4) "Family Relationships," which explores whether children from lesbian mother households experience more difficult familial relationships than children from heterosexual post-divorce families; (5) "The Family and the Outside World," which explores how children from lesbian mother families respond to differences between their family background and the dominant heterosexual culture in which they grow up; (6) "Intimate Relationships," which discusses whether young people raised by a lesbian mother are more likely to be attracted to and have relationships with partners of the same gender than are young people from heterosexual mother families; (7) "Psychological Adjustment," which explores whether children of lesbian mother families are at greater risk for psychological problems in the short and long term; and (8) "Conclusions," which discusses the study's findings. The book concludes with two appendices containing variables used in the statistical analyses. Contains 250 references. (LPP)

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